

**I. IN THE CLAIMS (CLEAN SHEET)**

1. A method of preparing naturally occurring Troponin I, which method comprises protecting free sulfhydryl groups of Troponin I under reducing conditions, wherein the free sulfhydryl groups are protected by sulfitolysis.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein sulfitolysis comprises reacting Troponin I with sodium sulfite.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the Troponin I is expressed in a bacterial expression system.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the bacterial expression system is an *E. coli* expression system.

6. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises purifying the sulfhydryl group protected Troponin I.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the Troponin I is purified by chromatography.

8. The method according to claim 6, which comprises purifying the Troponin I under non-reducing conditions.

9. The method according to claim 6, which further comprises deprotecting the sulfhydryl groups from the purified Troponin I.

13. A method of purifying naturally occurring Troponin I, which method comprises subjecting Troponin I comprising sulfhydryl protecting groups to chromatography to purify the sulfhydryl group protected Troponin I.

15. The method according to claim 14, wherein sulfitolysis comprises reacting, denatured Troponin I with sodium sulfite.

16. The method according to claim 13, which comprises subjecting the Troponin I to chromatography under non-reducing conditions.

17. The method according to claim 13, wherein the Troponin I is expressed in a bacterial expression system.

18. The method according to claim 17, wherein the bacterial expression system is an *E. coli* expression system.

19. The method according to claim 13, wherein the chromatography is an anion exchange.